

Mike

BILL SENNETT

Congratulating Mike's father about his stalwart son's being brought into the world was like congratulating a Kansas farmer who had just lost his home in one of those twisters for which the Jayhawker State is noted. The principal difference between Mike and a tornado is that a tornado is usually over in a flash. Mike goes on and on.

Mike is my sister's youngest boy. He was born on November 23, 1939. Little did the family realize as they gazed at this little cherub with the angelic face that they were looking at a reincarnation of "Peck's Bad Boy." The maternal side of the family feels sure that Mike inherited his sweet disposition from the paternal side.

Mike failed to display any homicidal tendencies until he had reached the ripe old age of sixteen months. It was on a Saturday afternoon that I was honored with the task of guarding this little bundle of innocence and delight from any harm that might befall him. Our mothers, armed to the teeth with advertising matter and some of my father's hard earned cash, had sallied forth on a shopping expedition. Mike was cheerfully playing in his play-pen, and I was stretched full-length on the couch listening to a football game. I must have dozed off, because the next thing I remember was that I jumped to my feet thinking the ceiling had caved in. I was mistaken. It was only lovable little Mike, standing there with a wicked gleam in his big brown eyes and a tack hammer in his hand. The big brown eyes with tears replacing the wicked gleam were all that kept me from "nephewicide." Despite

the huge lump on my head, I had great difficulty convincing my ever-loving sister that her pride and joy had attacked me with mayhem in his heart.

Mike's brown eyes are his chief stock in trade. About three weeks ago I took him to the grocery with me, and, as soon as we entered, women began commenting on his beautiful eyes and presumably sweet disposition. Mike stood demurely by, taking all of this in and probably thinking, "What fools these mortals be." I was going on about my business when suddenly I heard, "... and the little devil pulled it right off his head!" I was afraid to look around, but look I must. There stood Mike, leering at me from the doorway, with a malicious grin on his face and a sailor cap cocked jauntily on his head. I retrieved the hat as quickly as possible, returned it to the bawling brat whose mother had spoken, and stole silently from the store.

Mike is known as the "Roselawn terror"—Roselawn being the section of the city in which we dwell. It is well known that when Mike comes out the rest of the children go in. His advent resembles the approach of a swarm of locusts, or a leper, in the reaction that it brings forth. Mothers scurry hither and yon, guiding their flocks to safety; others rush to the phone and plead with their down-the-street neighbors to take the youngsters into their houses, as the distance is too great for them to make it home. When I walk down the street, I can feel the eyes burning into my back, and I can almost hear, "There goes the little brat's uncle."